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## **GLORIA MOLINA AND MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS EACH PROPOSE NEW L.A. COUNTY REDISTRICTING PLANS**

### **New Maps 'Honor Both the Letter and the Spirit of the Voting Rights Act'**

LOS ANGELES (August 16, 2011)—Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina and Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas each formally proposed new county Board of Supervisors redistricting plans—both of which create two Latino-opportunity districts while simultaneously ensuring that all other minority groups' voting powers remain protected.

"Our new maps simply follow the numbers," said Sup. Molina. "By doing so, our new maps honor both the letter and the spirit of the Voting Rights Act—which outlaws voting discrimination based on race and serves as the legal foundation of our modern Civil Rights Movement. If approved, either new map will ensure that no minority group's voting power is unfairly enhanced or diluted at the expense of another. Our new maps simply follow the law and the legal precedent set by the *Garza vs. County of Los Angeles* U.S. Supreme Court case. The *Garza* ruling clearly recognized and acknowledged how generations of disenfranchisement based on race prevented Los Angeles County from achieving the colorblind society we all strive for. We should persist on this righteous path because, in doing so, we propel the spirit of our American Civil Rights Movement into this new century."

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“I have maintained from the start of the redistricting process that our top priority as a Board must be to adhere to the federal Voting Rights Act requirements,” said Sup. Ridley-Thomas. “These requirements were not created abstractly to promote the political dominance of one interest group at the expense of other groups, but to serve all voters fairly. That the maps submitted today by Sup. Molina and myself result in the creation of Latino-opportunity voting districts is purely a consequence of our commitment to abide by the civil rights laws that have undergirded our democracy and that have made our country better.”

Molina’s new map—currently submitted as the “Voting Rights Compliance Map”—leaves the Second and Fifth Supervisorial Districts mostly unchanged but makes dynamic alterations elsewhere. The First District would encompass the core of the San Gabriel Valley; the Third District would stretch from the San Fernando Valley basin into downtown Los Angeles and Southeast Los Angeles; and the Fourth District would include all beach cities from Long Beach in the south to Malibu in the north as well as many of the hillside communities in the southern San Fernando Valley.

Molina’s new map is similar to the S1 Map—called the “African American Coalition Map”—submitted by Sup. Ridley-Thomas in that it also creates two Latino-opportunity supervisorial districts, and it leaves the Second and Fifth Supervisorial Districts mostly unchanged. However, the S1 Map complies with the Voting Rights Act by moving the San Fernando Valley basin into the First District and connecting it with downtown Los Angeles and unincorporated East Los Angeles; moving all hillside neighborhoods in the San Fernando Valley and all beach communities into the Third District; and designating the core of the San Gabriel Valley as the Fourth District.

“My new map simply presents a different way to achieve the same objective, which is to honor both the letter and the spirit of the Voting Rights Act,” continued Sup. Molina. “Either map is far preferable to the A2 Map currently supported by a majority of my colleagues, which packs the largest concentration of Latinos into one district, then divides the rest into the other four districts. The 2011 Census results show that although Latinos are still a minority in Los Angeles County, their numbers increased enough to create two Latino-opportunity districts. Given the continued, documented prevalence of racially-polarized voting—and the history, right here at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, of deliberately diluting Latino voting strength—Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and I firmly believe the A2 Map constitutes disenfranchisement and should be rejected in favor of either of our proposals.”

Every decade, data from the latest U.S. Census is used to redraw district boundaries for an array of governmental bodies throughout the nation. This includes the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The primary goal is to ensure that each district represents the same amount of people—and the 2011 Census results show the First District must gain 80,000 residents. Though this imbalance must be remedied, it cannot legally be accomplished by (among other criteria) diluting the strength of minority voters. Yet this is exactly what will happen under the A2 Map proposal since Latinos remain a minority in Los Angeles County even though their raw numbers have increased. Under both Molina’s and Ridley-Thomas’ proposals, these new Latino-opportunity districts also share other commonalities—such as socioeconomic conditions and voting prevalence.

Copies of the all maps are available upon request, or visit [www.redistricting.lacounty.gov](http://www.redistricting.lacounty.gov) by going to the “Boundary Review Committee” tab and selecting the “Submitted Plans” option.

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